Changing Patterns of Cohabitation

Trends
- 5% of single women in mid-1960's.
- 70% of single women in 1990s.
- Average partnership of 2 years (Ermisch and Francesconi).
- Experimental, not long term.
- 2% women cohabited prior to marriage in late 1960's.
- 80% women cohabited prior to marriage in late 1990's.
- 13% cohabited in 16-59 age group.
- 25% cohabited in 25-39 age group.
- 5% cohabited in 50-54 age group.
- 60% of those cohabiting are unmarried.
- One or both partners previously married.
- Parents who cohabited.

Reasons
- Smart and Stevens: Trial marriage, legal factors.
- Opposed to marriage, contingent commitment, mutual commitment.

Orientations
- Lewis et al: Marriage preference, cohabitation preference.
- Indistinguishable, marriage preference, cohabitation preference.

Age
- 16-59
- 25-39
- 50-54

Gender
- Mid-1960's, 5% of single women.
- 1990s, 70% of single women.
- Late 1960's, 2% women cohabited prior to marriage.
- Late 1990's, 80% women cohabited prior to marriage.

Social Trends
- Unmarried 16-59
- 13% cohabited
- 25% cohabited
- 5% cohabited

Marriage
- 60% of those cohabiting are unmarried.
- Alternative to marriage.
- Likelihood of marriage.
- One or both partners previously married.
- Parents who cohabited.

Attitudes to marriage
- Trial marriage
- Legal factors
- Opposed to marriage
- Contingent commitment
- Mutual commitment
Divorce

Child-bearing

Changing Patterns

History
- 1551: First UK divorce
- 1551 - 1738: 300 divorces
- 1857 Divorce Act
- 1921: 3,000 divorces
- 2001: 157,000 divorces

Trends
- Last 40 years: Increasingly popular
- Increase Males
- Increase Females
- Last 30 years: Divorcees getting older
- Last 20 years: Baby Boom bulge
- Last 10 years: Slight decline

Reasons
- Legal changes: 1971: Divorce Reform Act
- Economic changes: Cheaper, Legal aid
- Social changes: War-time marriages, Atitudes to marriage, Lifestyle choices, Social position
- Women: Economic independence

- Different social backgrounds
- Short acquaintance
- Separation for long periods
- Teenagers
- Remarriage

General fertility
- Family size
- Later motherhood

Births outside marriage
- Contraception
- Childlessness
- Later marriage
- Technology

Rates
- Contraception
- Childlessness
- Later marriage
- Technology

Decisions
- Education
- Security

Childless households

Reasons
- "At Risk" relationships
- Separation for long periods
- Teenagers
- Remarriage

Divorce

Changing Patterns